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## STAGE COACHES—1742.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

SIR—If history be an old almanack, then an old almanack is history; and a curious feature in the history of the progress of civilization in Ireland, I now offer to you, taken from one of these rare annuals, imprinted in Dublin, for the year 1742.

"The **ATHLONE** Stage Coach sets up with James Vaughan, in New Church-street, facing Tom of Lincoln. Sets out from Dublin on Thursday morning, at 7 in the Winter, and 8, in the Summer; comes in on Tuesday, between 6 and 7 at night. Rate for each person, 13s.—which is all forfeited, unless the person comes at the time appointed: but the money will be returned if the undertakers [ominous denomination!] happen to get another customer."

"The **BELFAST** Stage Coach sets up with James Smith, at the Unicorn, in Capel-street. Sets out from Dublin every Monday, and from Belfast every Thursday. In Winter it takes three days, and leaves Dublin at 8, and Belfast at 7 in the morning. In Summer it will take only two days, and set out from each place about 5 in the morning. This Coach will always run with 6 able horses."

"The **KILKENNY** Stage Coach sets up with the Widow Walsh, at the Coach and Horses, in George's-lane. [now South Great George's-street.] Sets out in Summer and Winter, at 6 in the morning, on Mondays and Thursdays; comes in on Tuesdays and Fridays. To Naas, 4s.; to Kilkullen Bridge, 5s. 5d.; and so on: To Kilkenny, 13s."

"The **KINNEGAD** Stage Coach takes in passengers at Henry Halls, grocer, Smithfield. Sets out in the Winter at 8 in the morning on Wednesday and Saturday; returns on Mondays and Fridays—rate 6s. 6d."

"The **NEWRY** Stage Coach sets up with James Bell, at the Bunch of Grapes, facing the Linen Hall. Sets out in Winter at 8 in the morning on Friday, and returns on Tuesday. Rate, to Drogheda, where it stops the first night, 5s. 5d, and to Newry, 13s. In the Summer it goes out twice a week, viz: On Tuesday and Saturday, and returns on Monday and Friday."

"The **DROGHEDA** Stage Landau sets up with Thomas Robinson, at the Boot Inn, Bolton-street. Sets out on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, at 9; comes in Monday, Wednesday, and Friday."

"The **Dublin Ferry Boat** plies in the Winter from Day-light till 9 at night."

This Ferry was exactly where Carlisle Bridge now stands: but then the approach to it from the College, was through one of the most barbarous and cut-throat lanes possible; I think it was called College-lane. I have touched, with my hands extended, the houses on each side.

It is extraordinary that there was no Stage Coach to Cork, Waterford, or Limerick. In fact, above forty years subsequent, there were none to any of these towns, and travellers were obliged to hire a chaise for the whole way; for there was not even posting. I remember in the year 1785, some friends who had to travel from Dublin to Cork, and they had to hire a chaise and pair to fetch them; the price was five guineas, and they took the same horses the whole way, and arrived on the fifth day at their destination. The same year I travelled with my family, and we had to take the chaise the whole way to Waterford, which we reached at two o'clock on the third day, and were delayed at the ferry (for there was no bridge) for nearly two hours; it took thirty-five minutes to cross in the horse boat, and about twenty-five in what was called the *light* boat; two or three men to each oar—the men standing, and rowing in the eddy tide for about three hundred yards, taking what they called *Mud-Stroke*s, and then, when so far above the opposite ferry, calculating that the rapid tide would bring them right to the other slip, which if they overshot, as was often the case, the labour was most severe to pull up again.

Does any one remember Dominick Roche and his Drogheda Coach? It would make a capital caricature!

It started—oh! inappropriate word,—at 9, and reached Drogheda at 4. I think I see him, as he drove me in 1788: he had a wig, at all variance with a Jarvie's true Caxon, and yet it was not a Lawyer's nor a Bishop's—it was a *sui-generis* concern. He had a blue coat, a red waistcoat over a pot belly, leather breeches, blue stockings, and buckles in his shoes. Dominick was the Proprietor as well as Driver of the above coach, which was thickly studded with brass nails, like a hair-bottom chair. The machine had two iron affairs called springs, but nearly perpendicular, and scarcely flexible. These were in front, but *behind*, there were two stout posts and chains, and woe be to the person whose teeth were loose! He stopped at the Black Bull—where is that now?—within five miles, I think, of Dublin, for nearly an hour; then at Swords, and at the Man of War for about one hour and a-half. He had the same horses to the latter place, and but a pair. Every one knew him, and he had a word for all; he was about seventy years of age the last time I saw him, and you might as well bend one of his springs, or posts, as to put him out of his way. You may talk of old times—and perhaps I may give you some more of them—but for one, I am content that they are passed by, and supplied by others in this and similar respects, at least, if not in all points, far preferable.

\* \* P.

## ANCIENT BRONZE ALTAR VESSEL.



The very interesting little Altar Vessel represented above, the size of the original, was found in the ruins of an old church in Island Magee, in the County of Antrim, and fell into the possession of an old woman in the neighbourhood, who used it for many years to hold oil for her spinning-wheel. Its workmanship is of great beauty, being not only of graceful proportion, but as round and smooth as if turned in a lathe. The inscription round its neck, which is in a beautiful square Irish character, enables us to ascertain with precision its age and original owner; it is as follows:—

“\* OṚ. do. maṛtaṇ. hu. bṛolchaṇ.”

“Pray for Martin O'Brolachain.”

From the Annals of the Four Masters, as well as the Annals of Innisfallen, we find that this Martin O'Brolachain was Professor of Divinity in the Abbey of Armagh, and died in the year 1188. He is called the most wise of all the Irish of his time.

The family name of O'Brolachain, though now, and for

a long period, plebeian, was anciently, like most common Irish names, of honorable distinction, and supplied many eminent persons to the church, as will be seen from the following extracts from our Annals:—

“Mael-Brigid O'Brolchan, Bishop of Leinster and Kildare, who is called by our Annalists, a man of great fame, died in 1097.

“Mael-columb O'Brolchan, was suffragan to Celsus, the Archbishop of Armagh, in the year 1122.

“Mael-Brigid O'Brolchan, who was suffragan to Gelasius, Archbishop of Armagh, died on the 29th of January, 1139. He is called a man of great virtues.

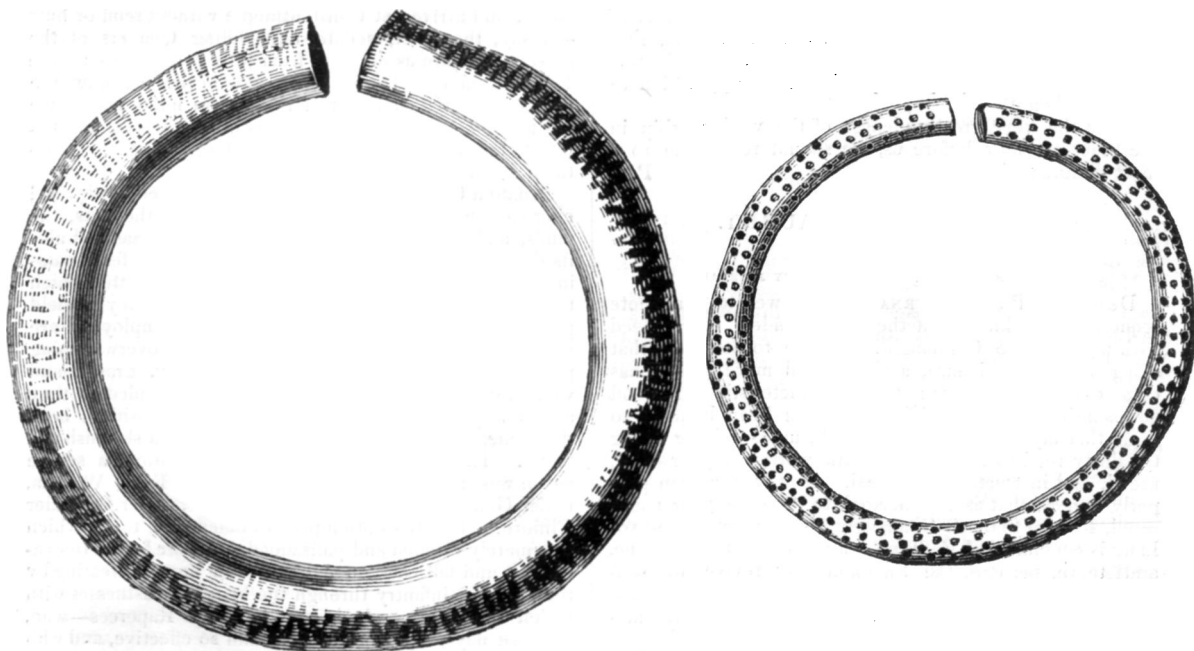
“Flathbert O'Brolchain, was promoted to the Bishoprick of Derry, in 1158, and was one of the most distinguished ecclesiastics of his time for learning, piety, and charity. He was previously Abbot of Derry, and Su-

preme Moderator of all the Abbies of Ireland. He was also elected to the Abbey of Hy, or Iona, but refused the election. In the year 1164, he built the Cathedral of Derry, by the assistance of Maurice, or properly Murchearthach Mac Laughlin, King of Ireland. He died in the year 1175.”—*See Ware's Bishops.*

“O'Brolchain, the Prior and Grand Senior of the Abbey of Derry, died in 1202. He was in high estimation for his many virtues and extensive learning.”—*Ann. Munster.*

The curious and interesting relic of this ancient family above described, is now in the possession of an intelligent antiquary in the County of Down, and is valuable not only as an ancient relic, but as a proof of the accuracy and authenticity of those Annals to which we have so frequently referred. P.

### ANCIENT IRISH BRACELETS OF GOLD



The prefixed wood-cuts represent two rings of Gold of the same size, found, a few weeks since, by a countryman near the Castle of Trimleston, in the County of Meath, and purchased by Mr. Charles Stewart, Silversmith, of Dame-street, in whose possession the larger ring at present remains, the smaller one has passed into the Museum of the Dean of St. Patricks. The larger ring weighs 12 ounces, the smaller 2 ounces, 2 drs.

The gold in both is of an exceeding fine quality.

Rings of this kind are frequently found in our Island, and were probably used for Bracelets. They occur not only in gold, but also in silver and brass, and their use among warriors, which appears to have been general, constituted a chief temptation to the cupidity of the Northern hordes who infested our island so long, and whose heroes are usually characterised by their Poets, as “exacters of rings” or “the conquerors of the forlorn wearers of rings,” the “generous distributors of rings,” &c.

When we reflect on the extraordinary quantity of gold ornaments which are still frequently—we might almost say daily—discovered in our bogs, &c. it will at once account for the persevering bravery which those pirates displayed in their incursions, and give a remarkable proof of the quantity of this precious metal, anciently in our island; for it is a fact, that gold ornaments are of far more frequent occurrence than those of silver or bronze.

Rings of this kind, were not only used as ornaments, but before the introduction of minted coin, served as

money. They are frequently made mention of in our annals. Thus at the year 1150, it is recorded in the annals of the Four Masters, that the blessed Abbot (of Derry) Flabertach O'Brolchan, brother to Maol Brigid, Archbishop of Armagh, made a visitation throughout Kinel-eogan (Tirone) and received from Murchearthach Huachluinn, King of Ireland, twenty oxen, together with the King's own horse, and a gold ring which weighed five ounces, &c.; and in the following year it is recorded that the Abbot made another visitation throughout Siolcathasaich, and received from Cuculad O'Flann, Prince of that country, a horse, with a gold ring weighing two ounces, from every nobleman, a horse; and a sheep from each master of a family.

We have already observed (p. 157) that the golden collars and bracelets are frequently found together, corresponding in pattern. The former also served in lieu of money, and are also frequently mentioned in our annals.—Thus in the year 1004, the monarch, Brian Boroimhe, on leaving the town of Armagh, in which he had sojourned for a week, left a collar of gold, weighing twenty ounces, as alms, on the great altar of the church (annals of Innisfallen). It will probably be asked, was this profusion of the most precious metal, of native production or foreign importation? In our opinion it must have been the product of our own mines, for if it were not, gold ornaments would be equally discovered in the sister Islands, and we should not have been without some notice of their impor-